

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are cancelled and Claims 17-32 are added. Claims 17-32 remain in the application. No new matter is added by the amendments to the claims.

The Rejections:

In the Office Action dated March 7, 2006, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner stated that in Claim 1-16, the inconsistency between the language in the preamble "apparatus" and certain portions of the body of the claim such as "a leading cable-end, a trailing cable-end, a cable-length, cable-ends" renders the scope of the claim vague and indefinite because it is unclear if the intent is to claim either the subcombination alone or the combination of the "apparatus" and "a leading cable-end, a trailing cable-end, a cable-length, cable-ends". The Examiner requested Applicants to clarify what subject matter the claim is intended to be drawn to, i.e., the subcombination alone or the combination of the "apparatus" and "a leading cable-end, a trailing cable-end, a cable-length, cable-ends", where the language of the claim is to be amended to be consistent with this intent. The Examiner stated that he understands that Applicants are claiming the subcombination.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Conte. (US 6,658,726). The Examiner stated that "Conte discloses in Fig. 1 8-11 and 22 of different cable-end processing stations and 22 being a double crimping unit; 5-6 provide cables and belt drives; 7 is the swiveling arm and gripper; Fig. 8 shows a turntable with a belt drive below 46 and 47; 14 is a cable transportation belt.

The Response:

Applicants rewrote Claims 1-16 as new Claims 17-19, 23, 24, 20-22 and 25-32 respectively to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Applicants confirm that the claims are directed to the subcombination.

Conte shows a pivot head 7 that supplies the leading end of each of two cables 3, 4 to one or more processing stations 8 to 11 for stripping and attaching a crimp contact. After processing,

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the leading ends are ejected from the pivot head 7 to a cable deposit device 1. A pivot arm 21 with gripping units 19, 20 supplies rear ends of the cables 3, 4 to a stripping unit 42, a unit 43 for bringing the cable ends together and a double crimping unit 22. Thus, the pivot head 7 moves only the leading ends of the cables and the pivot arm 21 moves only the rear ends of the cables.

In contrast, new independent Claims 17 and 26 define a swiveling arm 2.1 and a gripper 2.2 that are the sole means to move in sequence the leading and trailing ends of the cable-length. Thus, the Conte pivot head 7 is not the claimed swiveling arm since the pivot head 7 only moves the leading ends of the cables and is not the sole means for moving the cable-ends. In Conte, the leading ends and the rear ends of the cables are held, moved and processed by separate pivoting and processing devices.

In view of the amendments to the claims and the above arguments, Applicants believe that the claims of record now define patentable subject matter over the art of record. Accordingly, an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.